OLDCITYBLUES.COM

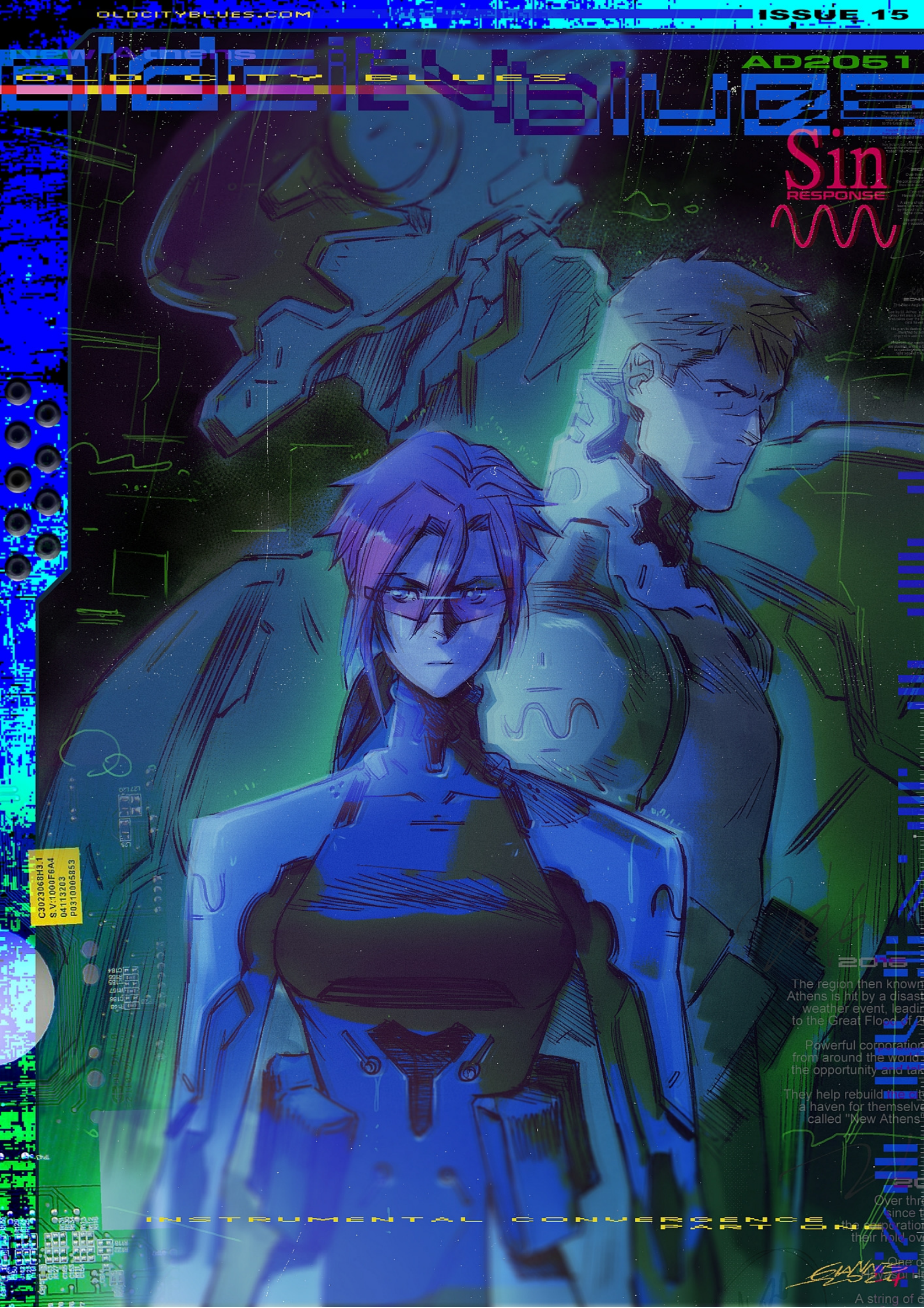
ISSUE 15

new horizons

OLD CITY BLUES

AD2051

Sin RESPONSE



INSTRUMENTAL CONVERGENCE PART ONE

2075

The region then known
Athens is hit by a disas
weather event, leadi
to the Great Flood of 2

Powerful corporation
from around the world
the opportunity and ta

They help rebuild the c
a haven for themselve
called "New Athens

Over thr
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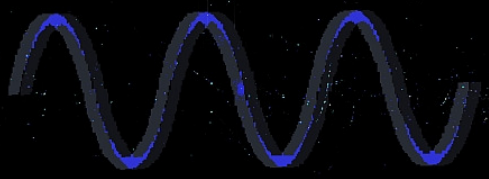
AD2051

OLD CITY BLUES

Sin

RESPONSE



INSTRUMENTAL CONVERGENCE

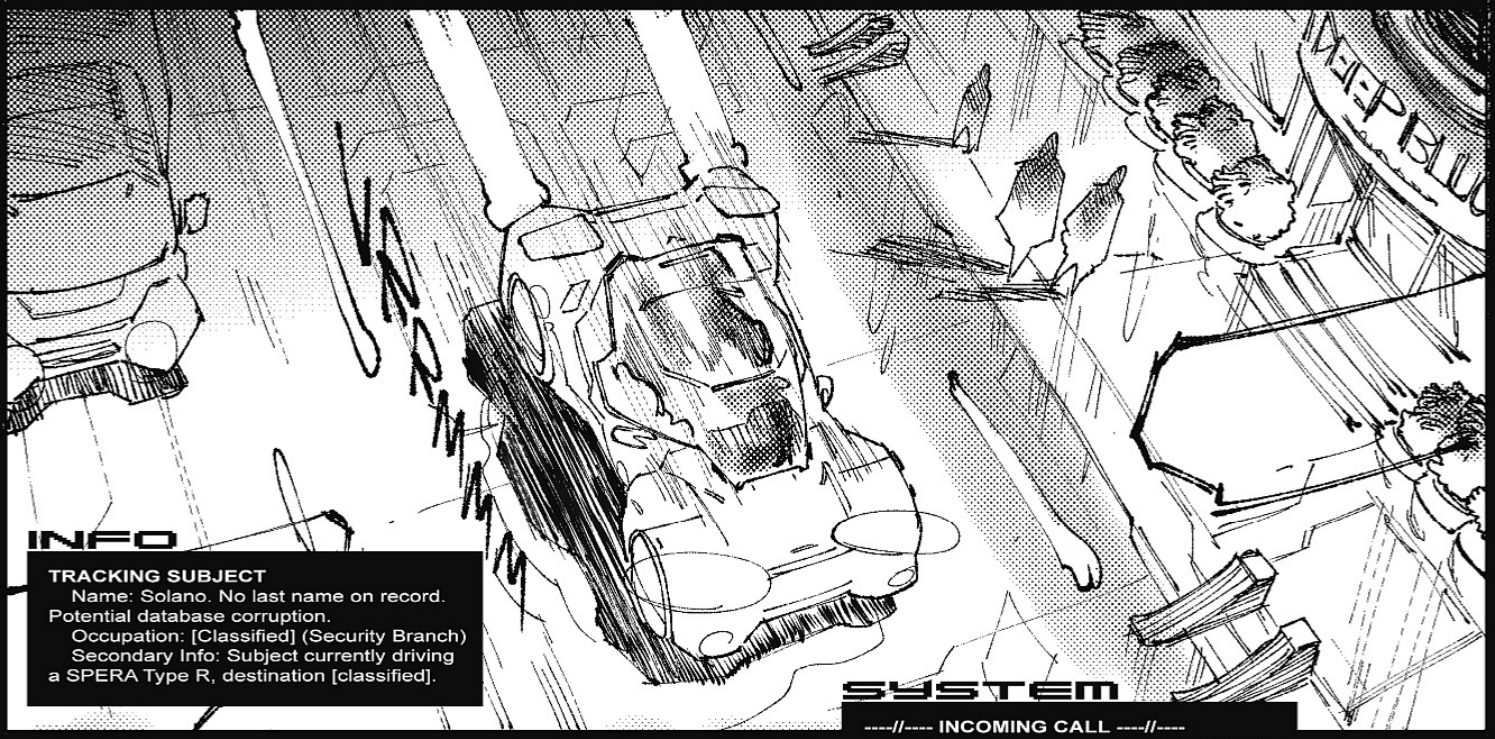
Part One

Thank you for your patience.
And now, our feature presentation.

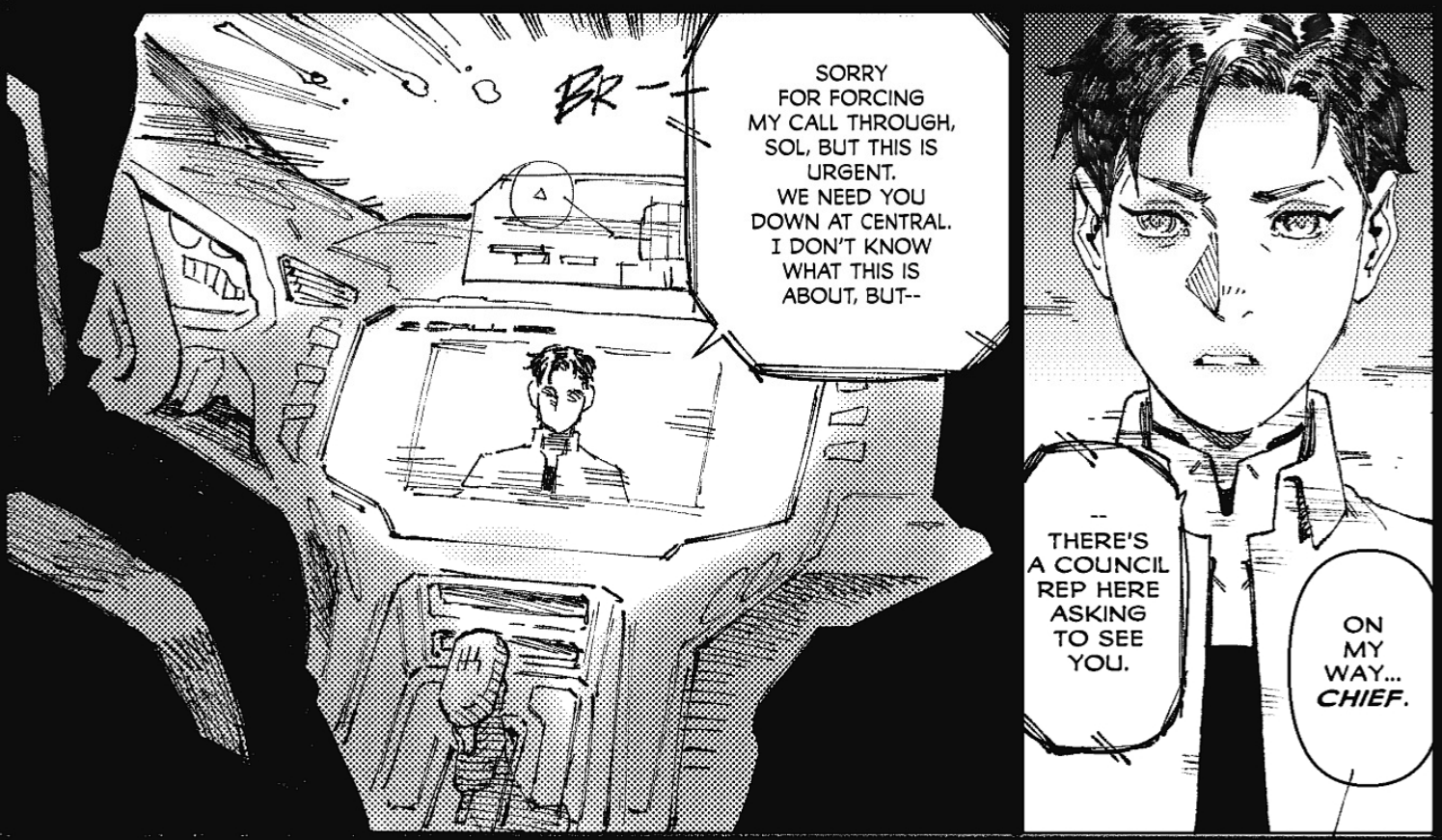
OLDCITYBLUES.COM

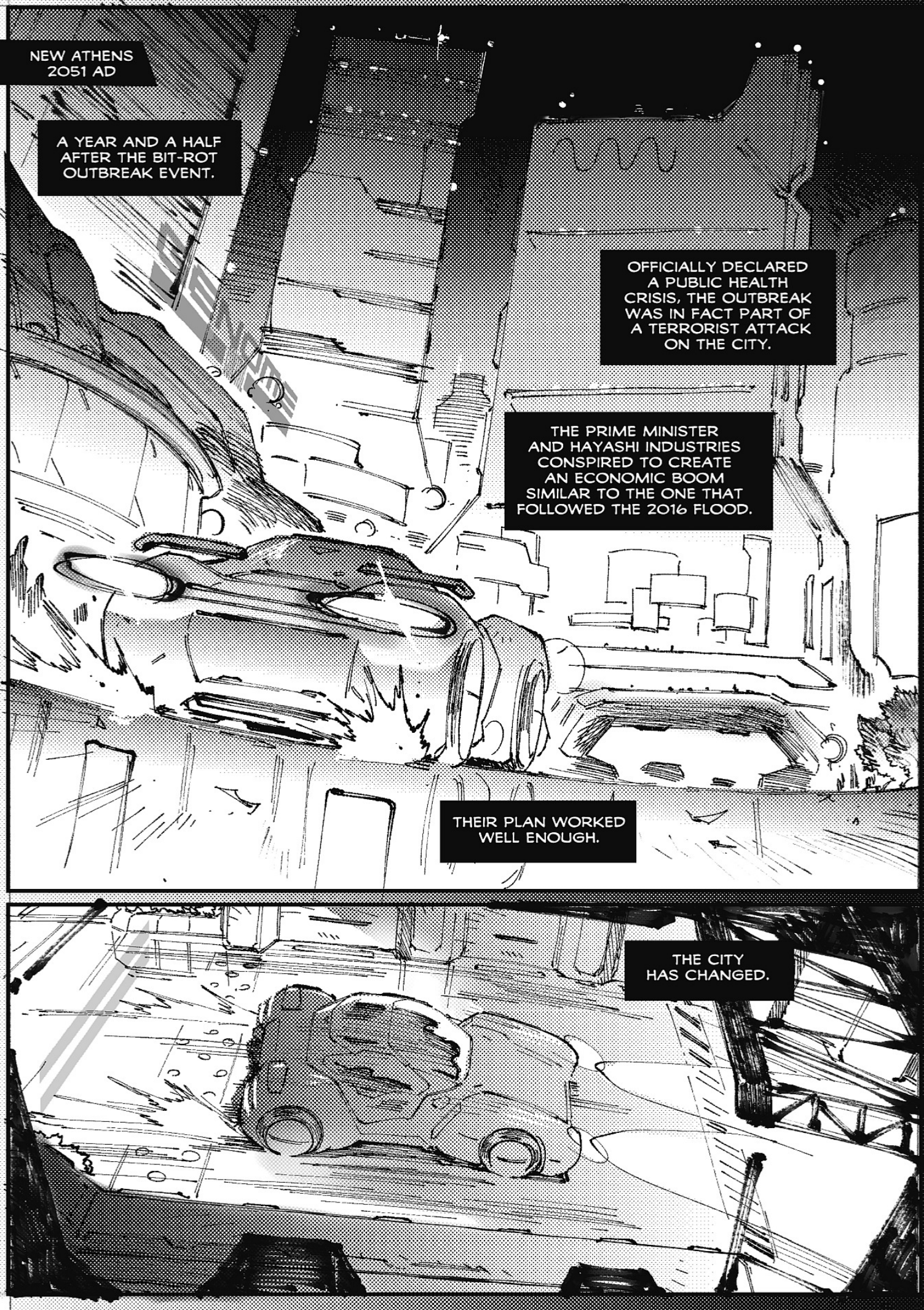
OLD CITY BLUES Created by Giannis Milonogiannis.

INFO
New Athens.
AD2051.
Current Weather Condition:
Overcast.
Tracked Subject Location:
Business District.

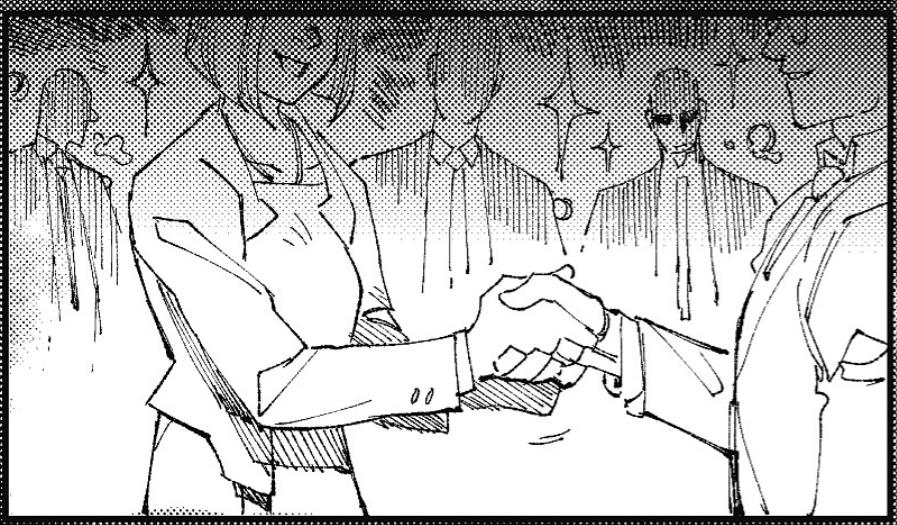

INFO
TRACKING SUBJECT
Name: Solano. No last name on record. Potential database corruption.
Occupation: [Classified] (Security Branch)
Secondary Info: Subject currently driving a SPERA Type R, destination [classified].

SYSTEM
----//---- INCOMING CALL ----//----
_speaker system override(145, 32, false);
////WAIT FOR RESPONSE
_wait_override(8);
---// URGENT //---
_call_active();
?
BRRT...
BRRt...


BR--
SORRY FOR FORCING MY CALL THROUGH, SOL, BUT THIS IS URGENT. WE NEED YOU DOWN AT CENTRAL. I DON'T KNOW WHAT THIS IS ABOUT, BUT--
--THERE'S A COUNCIL REP HERE ASKING TO SEE YOU.
ON MY WAY... CHIEF.


NEW ATHENS
2051 AD
A YEAR AND A HALF AFTER THE BIT-ROT OUTBREAK EVENT.
OFFICIALLY DECLARED A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS, THE OUTBREAK WAS IN FACT PART OF A TERRORIST ATTACK ON THE CITY.
THE PRIME MINISTER AND HAYASHI INDUSTRIES CONSPIRED TO CREATE AN ECONOMIC BOOM SIMILAR TO THE ONE THAT FOLLOWED THE 2016 FLOOD.
THEIR PLAN WORKED WELL ENOUGH.
THE CITY HAS CHANGED.

FOLLOWING THE OUTBREAK, THE PUBLIC BECAME DISSATISFIED WITH THE GOVERNMENT AND ITS MISHANDLING OF THE SITUATION.



MUCH OF THE CRITICISM WAS CENTERED ON THE EXTREME MILITARIZATION OF THE POLICE. AS A RESULT, THE MAJORITY OF THE NEW ATHENS POLICE FORCE WAS DISSOLVED.

HOWEVER, CAPITAL RETAINED ITS VICE-LIKE GRIP ON POWER.

NEW LAWS WERE DRAFTED TO ALLOW GREATER FREEDOM TO CORPORATIONS -- LEADING TO PRIVATE SECURITY FORCES OF UNPRECEDENTED SCALE.

SPECIAL POLICE DIVISION TEN -- SDX -- WAS THEN OFFICIALLY DISBANDED.

CHIEF GORTYN PULLED EVERY STRING HE HAD LEFT TO KEEP HIS TEAM TOGETHER.

THE CORE OF SDX WAS REUNITED UNDER A NEW SERVICE.

SOON AFTER THE NEW UNIT WAS FORMED, CHIEF GORTYN RETIRED.

THIS NEW TEAM WAS NAMED:

"SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS RESPONSE" UNIT.

EVERYONE CALLS IT "SIN RESPONSE."

TIMELINE

2016

The region then known as Athens is hit by a disastrous weather event, leading to the Great Flood of 2016.

Powerful corporations from around the world see the opportunity and take it.

They help rebuild the city into a haven for themselves, called "New Athens".

2048

Over three decades since the Flood, the corporations have solidified their hold over New Athens.

One of these is Hayashi Heavy Industry.

A string of cyborg murders leads Solano to uncover a plot by Hayashi's CEO to create a digital clone of himself.

His attempt, however, only succeeds partially.

2049

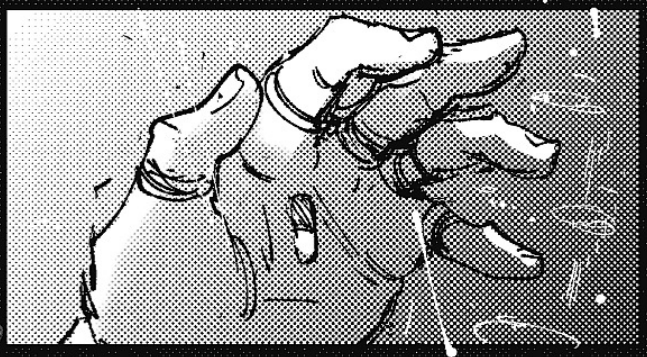
A mysterious new drug hits the city streets -- JJ-180.

The SDX, newly merged with the Mobile Gun Unit, investigate.

They uncover Jota, the leader of a drug cartel out to create an army of psychics enhanced by this new drug.

Solano gives Jota a handful of her own medicine.

It doesn't take long for other labs to copy JJ-180 and keep it circulating.



2049

The Black Aegis Incident.

Led by Lt. Armes, a paramilitary group initiates a city-wide hack and takes over the New Athens data haven.

His plan to destroy the city is thwarted by Solano, Thermidor and the others.

However, the seeds of doubt are planted, and the SDX begins to question their ability to fight against the corps.

2050

The kidnapping of a virtual idol uncovers a scheme by the Prime Minister to create a crisis on the level of the 2016 flood by unleashing a cybernetics virus on the city.

The SDX encounters Baltic, a former cop who will betray all allegiances in his efforts to create an AI Construct of his deceased wife.

The outbreak takes months to fully subside.

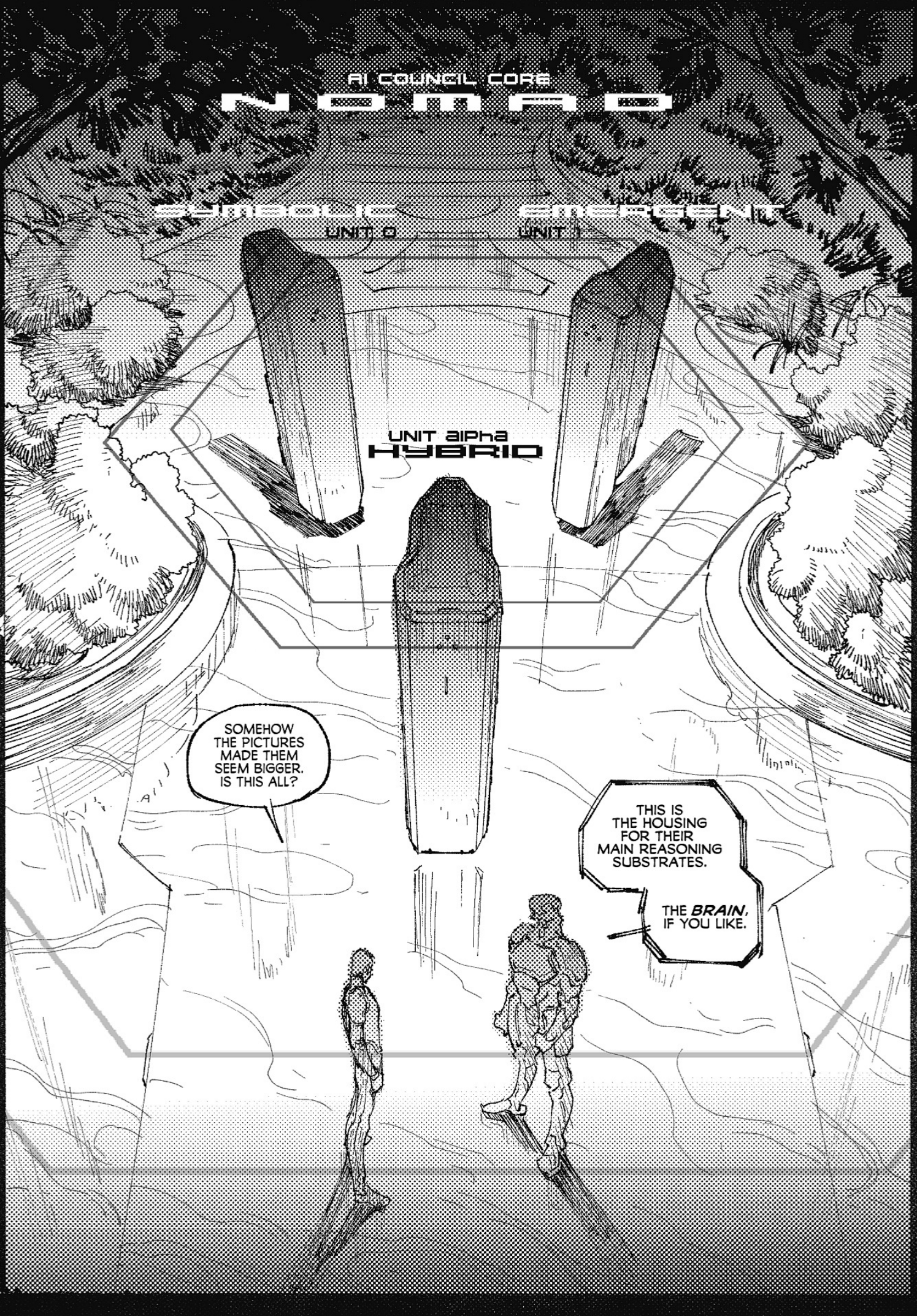
Baltic has not been seen since.

EARTH TO *SOL* -- YOU WITH US, BUD?
YEAH, SORRY... WHAT'S GOING ON? WHY'S AN *AI COUNCIL* REP HERE?
I WAS HOPING *YOU* COULD TELL *ME*...
THINK THEY MIGHT NEED *SDX* TO HELP OUT WITH SOMETHING *?*
HEY, IT'S *"SIN RESPONSE"* NOW, THERMIDOR-- REMEMBER?
YEAH, WHATEVER. THEY JUST MOVED US AROUND AND GAVE US A NEW NAME, HOPING PEOPLE WILL FORGET LAST YEAR.
OH? IS THAT ALL WE DID, NOW?

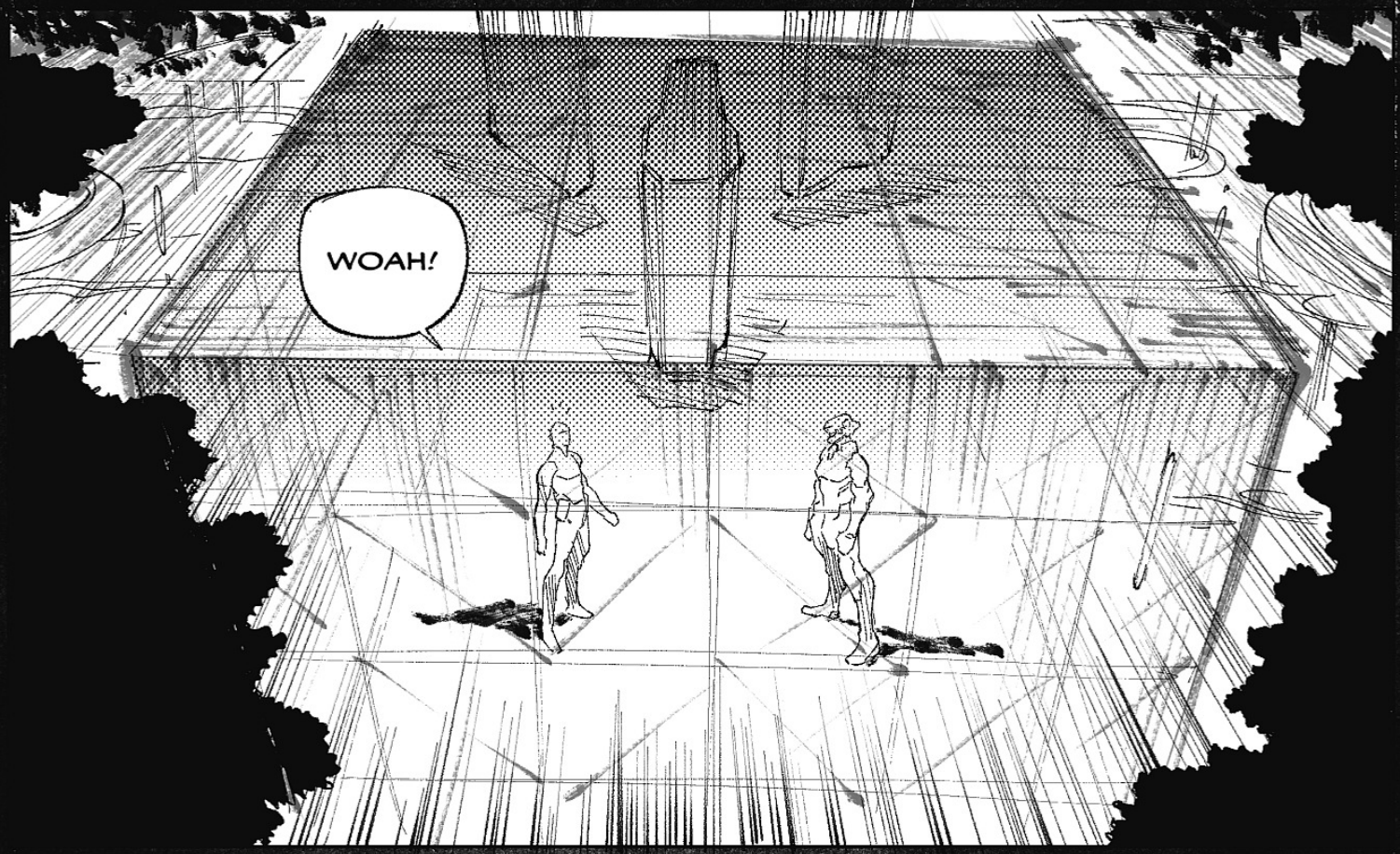
*CASTing refers to the ability of AI persons to broadcast their consciousness to generic bodies placed around the city.

WHEEE

INFO
The MEGARON
AI Council (NOMAD) Headquarters. Established early 2051.
The city's governance is now handled largely by the AI Council. Human agents, such as the Prime Minister, are still active albeit in a severely minimized role.
NOTE
NOMAD was the project name during the AI Council's development.
NOMAD is still used to refer to the Council but is not an official designation.
GUESS *THIS* IS WHERE THE SHOW IS RUN FROM NOW, HUH?
COME, I'D LIKE YOU TO MEET THEM.


AI COUNCIL CORE
NOMAD
SYMBOLIC
UNIT 0
EMERGENT
UNIT 1
UNIT alpha
HYBRID
SOMEHOW THE PICTURES MADE THEM SEEM BIGGER. IS THIS ALL?
THIS IS THE HOUSING FOR THEIR MAIN REASONING SUBSTRATES.
THE BRAIN, IF YOU LIKE.

*ALICE is a virtual assistant developed by the NOMAD Council, currently released as a pilot program only available to government officials. SIN Response has also been granted early access to the software.


WOAH!

THIS IS CUTTING EDGE RESOLUTION. NOT JUST THE RAW QUALITY, BUT THE *FIDELITY* OF THE RECORDING, TOO...
GUESS THE COUNCIL DOESN'T HAVE TO WORRY TOO MUCH ABOUT *BUDGET CUTS...*
IF YOU HAVE A COMPLAINT TO FILE, SOLANO, I'D BE HAPPY TO HELP -- AFTER YOU SEE THIS.

NO, NO, I WAS JUST KIDDING--
WAIT, WHAT THE...

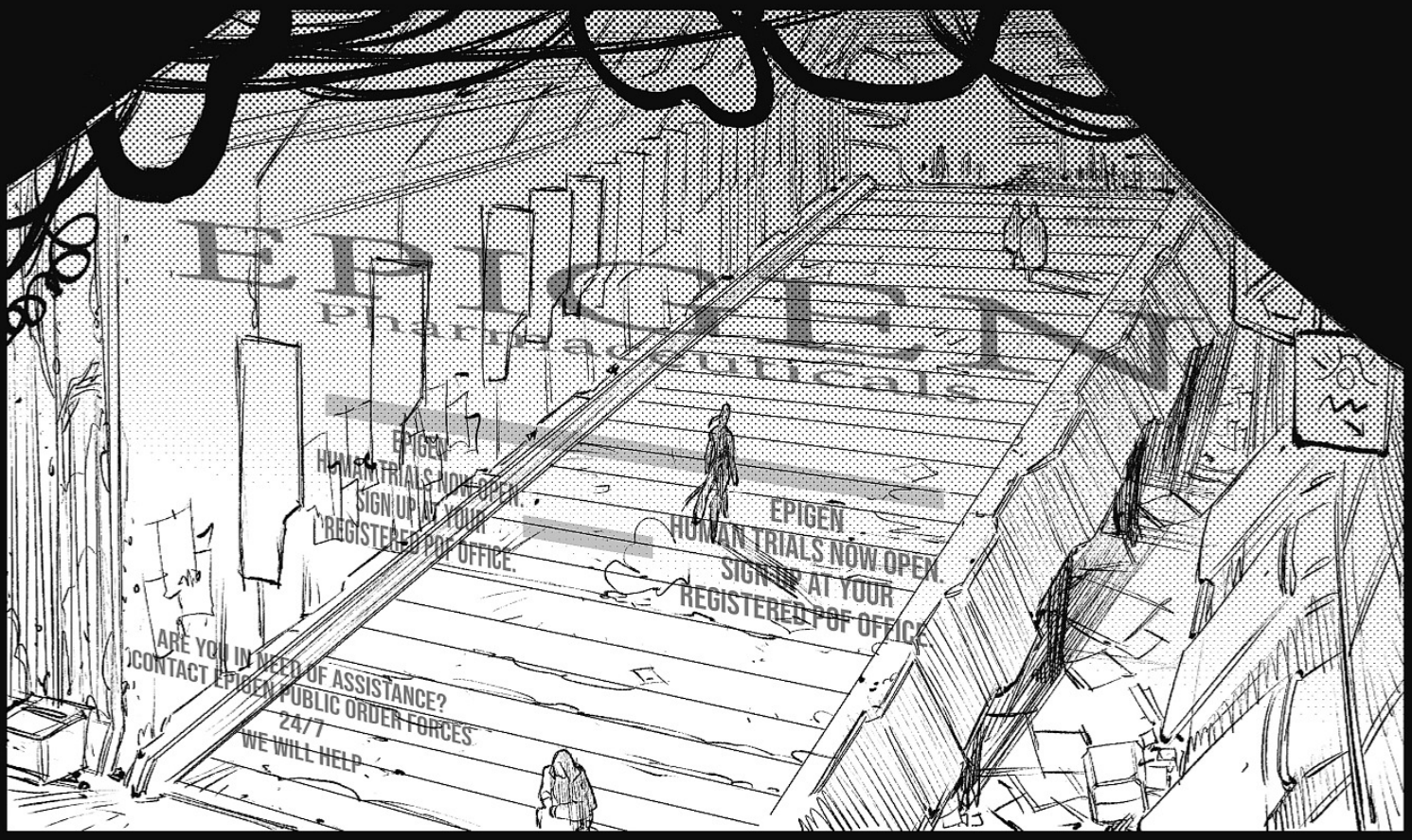
CHIEF GORTYN!?
EX-CHIEF GORTYN, SOLANO.

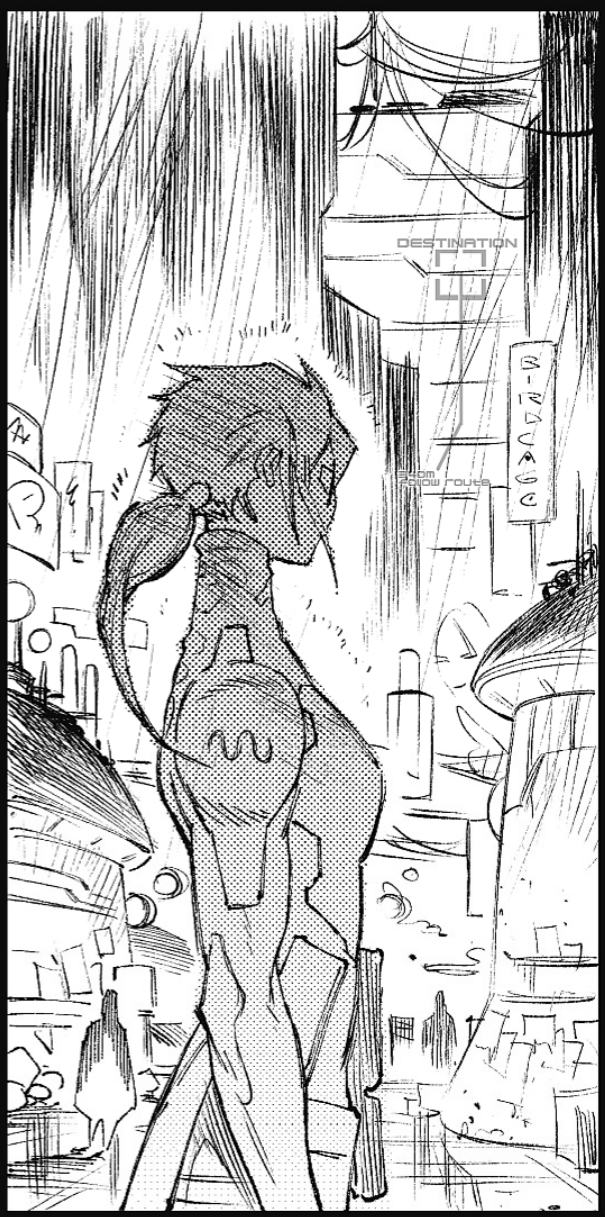
HOW SOLID IS THIS DATA?
OUR ANALYSIS PLACES THIS AT 97% AUTHENTICITY.
A THIRD PARTY IS CROSS-CHECKING THE RECORDING AS WE SPEAK.
I'D LIKE NEWBERG TO VERIFY THE DATA AS WELL, ARGENTUM.
I'LL HAVE ALICE SEND IT OVER.
SO, ASSUMING THIS IS REAL, WHAT WAS HE DOING HERE?
THERE, IN HIS HAND.
THAT'S A MAINFRAME SIGNATURE AUTHENTICATION KEYCHAIN.
IN SHORT, IT ALLOWS FOR DIRECT ACCESS TO CORE COUNCIL SYSTEMS.
AS FAR AS WE KNOW, WE'RE THE ONLY ONES IN POSSESSION OF SUCH KEYCHAINS.
CLEARLY NOT THE CASE.
CAN WE ASK NOMAD ITSELF WHAT THE CHIEF DID TO IT?
EX-CHIEF, SOLANO.
AND THAT'S OUR PROBLEM--
NOMAD IS LOCKED IN A DELIBERATION LOOP.

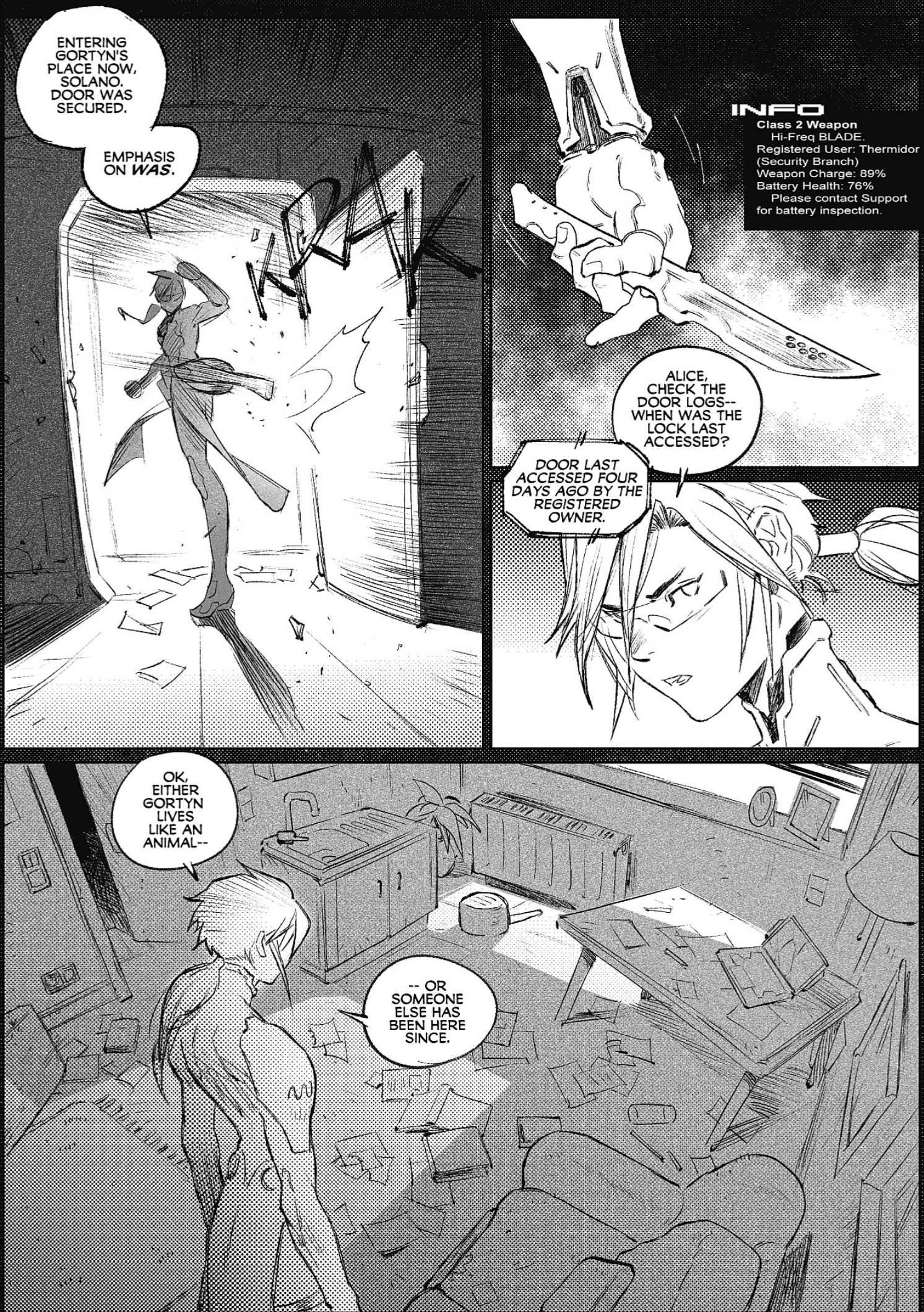
THIS IS THERMIDOR-- ON MY WAY TO GORTYN'S LAST KNOWN RESIDENCE.
THERMIDOR
SOLANO... ARE YOU BUYING IT?
SOMETHING ABOUT THIS STORY SEEMS OFF...
SOLANO
NOT SURE YET. NEWBERG'S REVIEWING DATA INTEGRITY AS WE SPEAK. LET'S PROCEED UNDER THE ASSUMPTION THE RECORDING IS REAL.
EYE
THIS ARGENTUM GUY... DO YOU TRUST HIM?
HE WORKS FOR THE COUNCIL, THERMIDOR. WHAT CHOICE DO WE HAVE?

INFO
Barrier Wall City ~ SECOND NOAH.
Population: 28.321 (AD2041)
Established in 2029 as living quarters for old city cleanup workers.
Currently under the control of EPIGEN Pharmaceuticals.

ALICE, AIR QUALITY.
AIR QUALITY INDEX: 98 US AQI. POLLUTION LEVEL: MODERATE.
NO MASK, THEN.
AIR
BAR

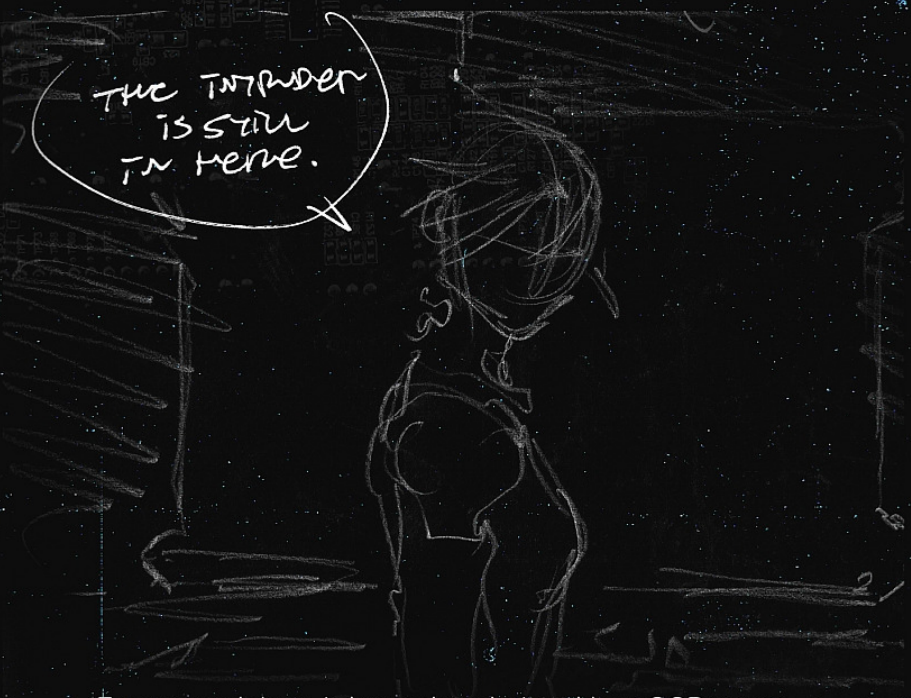

EPIGEN
pharmaceuticals
EPIGEN
HUMAN TRIALS NOW OPEN.
SIGN UP AT YOUR
REGISTERED POF OFFICE.
EPIGEN
HUMAN TRIALS NOW OPEN.
SIGN UP AT YOUR
REGISTERED POF OFFICE.
ARE YOU IN NEED OF ASSISTANCE?
CONTACT EPIGEN PUBLIC ORDER FORCES
24/7
WE WILL HELP


DESTINATION


ENTERING GORTYN'S PLACE NOW, SOLANO. DOOR WAS SECURED.
EMPHASIS ON *WAS*.
INFO
Class 2 Weapon
Hi-Freq BLADE.
Registered User: Thermidor (Security Branch)
Weapon Charge: 89%
Battery Health: 76%
Please contact Support for battery inspection.
ALICE, CHECK THE DOOR LOGS-- WHEN WAS THE LOCK LAST ACCESSED?
DOOR LAST ACCESSED FOUR DAYS AGO BY THE REGISTERED OWNER.
OK, EITHER GORTYN LIVES LIKE AN ANIMAL--
-- OR SOMEONE ELSE HAS BEEN HERE SINCE.

NOW LET'S SEE... DOOR WAS SECURE UNTIL IT MET MY *FOOT*.
ONLY OTHER ENTRY POINT SEEMS TO BE THE *WINDOW*, WHICH IS LOCKED AND INTACT.
SOLANO
WINDOW'S LESS SECURE THAN THE DOOR-- COULD HAVE BEEN HACKED.
DRONE, MAYBE?
NO *WAY* ANY DRONE IS GETTING THROUGH THIS TANGLE OF POWER LINES ON STREET LEVEL.
AND THERE'S A SAFETY MESH ALL ALONG THE ROOF'S PERIMETER.
SOL, THIS ISN'T GOING TO MAKE *SENSE*, BUT--

THE INTRUDER IS STILL IN HERE.
TO BE CONTINUED



For a second there, I almost thought I could put OCB to rest.

Over the years since Issue 14, I kept finding my mind drifting back to it. Why keep obsessing over something you started when you were 21?

It's become clearer than ever that I'm likely stuck with OCB forever.

It's like a friend you haven't seen in years, only to feel like a day hasn't gone by when you finally meet again.
But years have gone by, and I'm barely the same person I was in 2014., when the last main arc began -- let alone 2009 when this whole thing started.

Maybe this is my safety blanket, or a tether to some ideal past that only exists in my head.
I really don't know why I keep returning, other than to just check in on my kids, then peace out for years at a time.
Maybe that's enough?

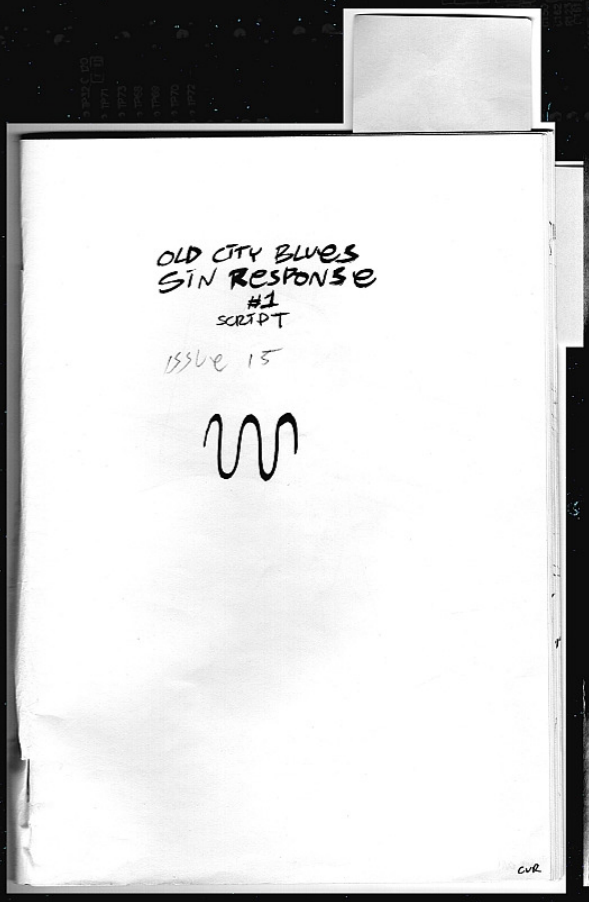
I've been picking away at this issue for close to a year now. I thought about fixing some of the incosistencies but it almost seemed antithetical to the diary-like feel they give OCB.
Why was I trying to do clean, digital word balloons? I have no idea, but there they are.

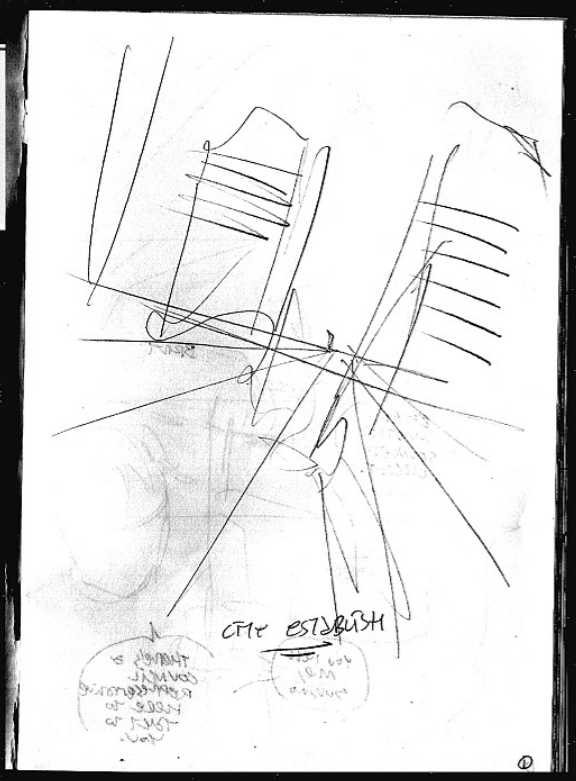
I hope the next issue won't take as long, but I think anyone who's still around has gotten used to these timescales anyway.

Hopefully this new arc turns out good -- let's find out together.

As always, thanks for reading!

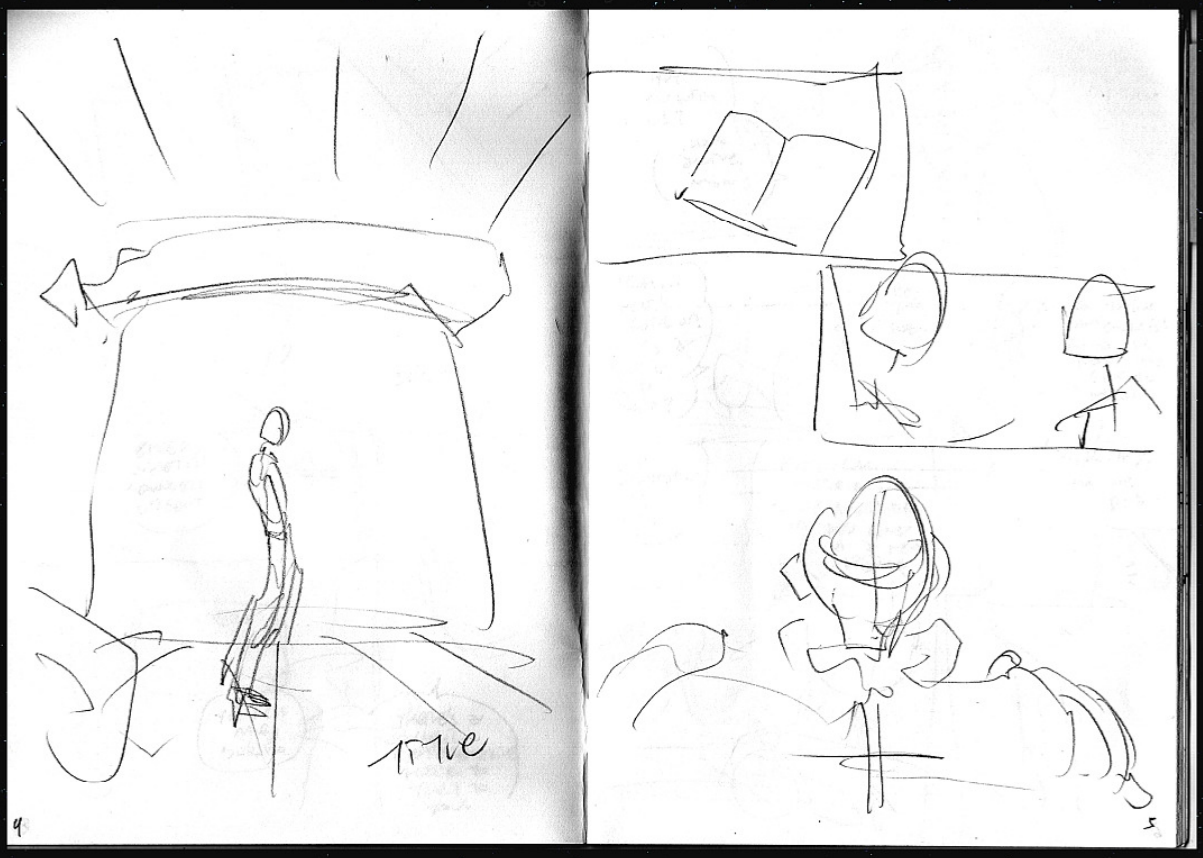
SIANNE 2024

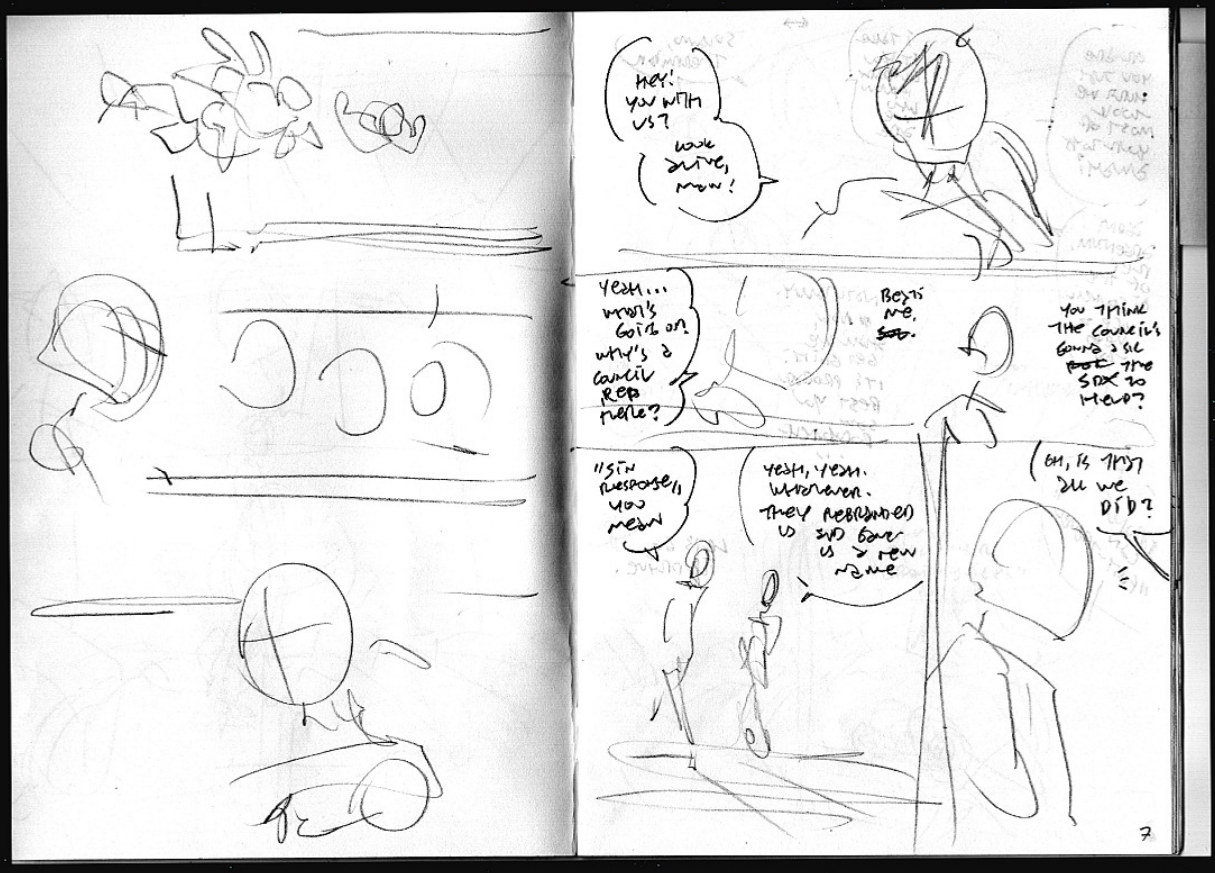

OLD CITY BLUES
SIN RESPONSE
#1
SCRIPT
ISSUE 15
CVR

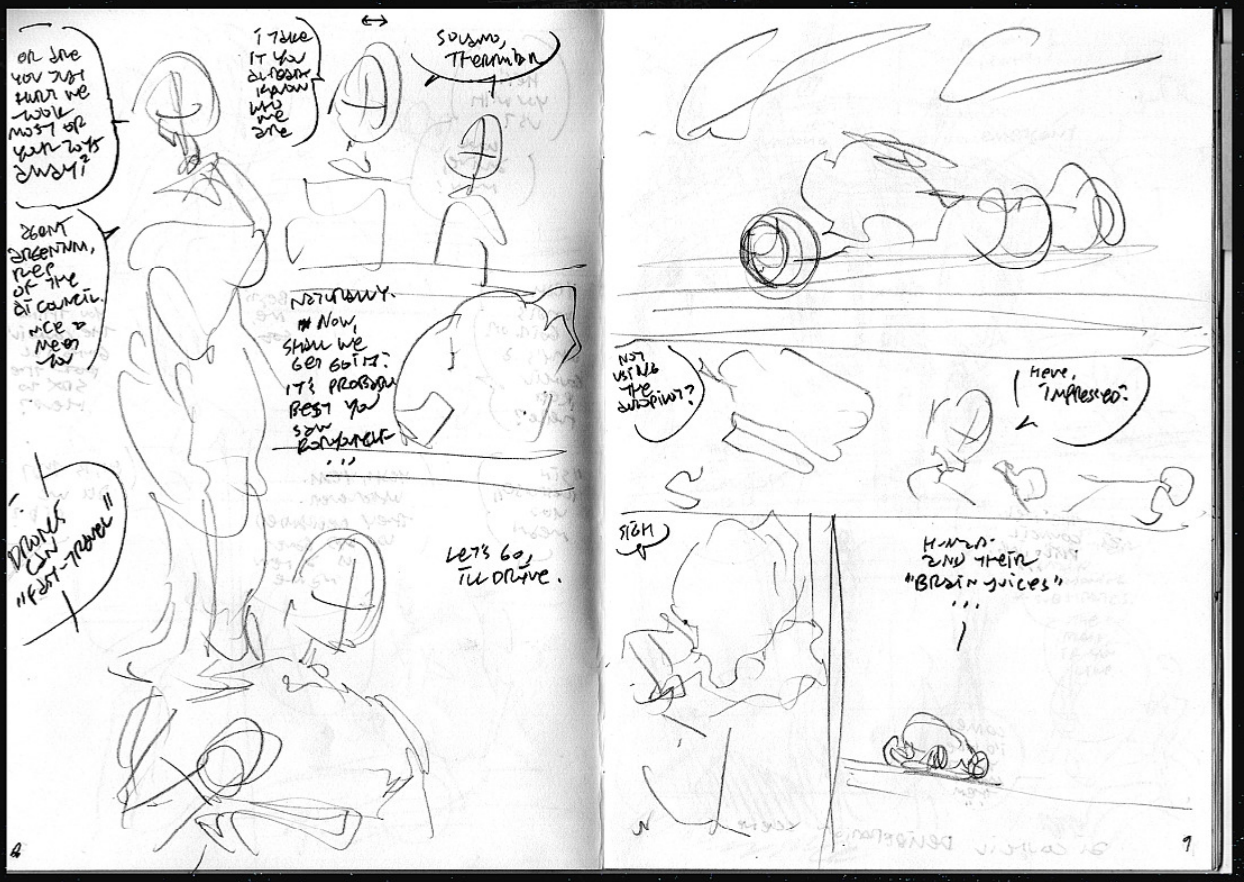

CITY ESTABLISH
1

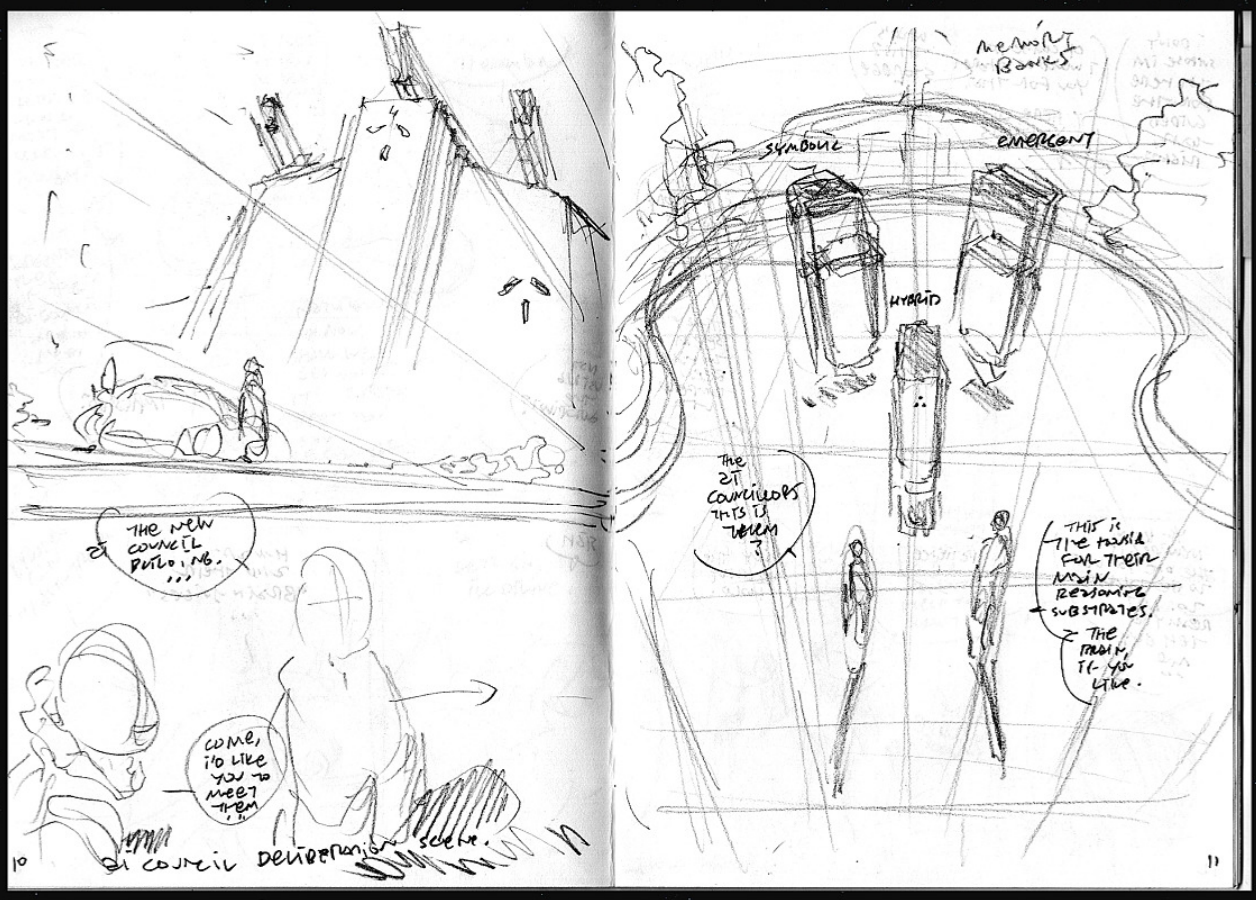
BRAM
ENTER/ KNOCKING SOUNDED URGENT.
SCREEN
YOU TELL ME, SOLDIER
THERE'S A COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE HERE TO TALK TO YOU.

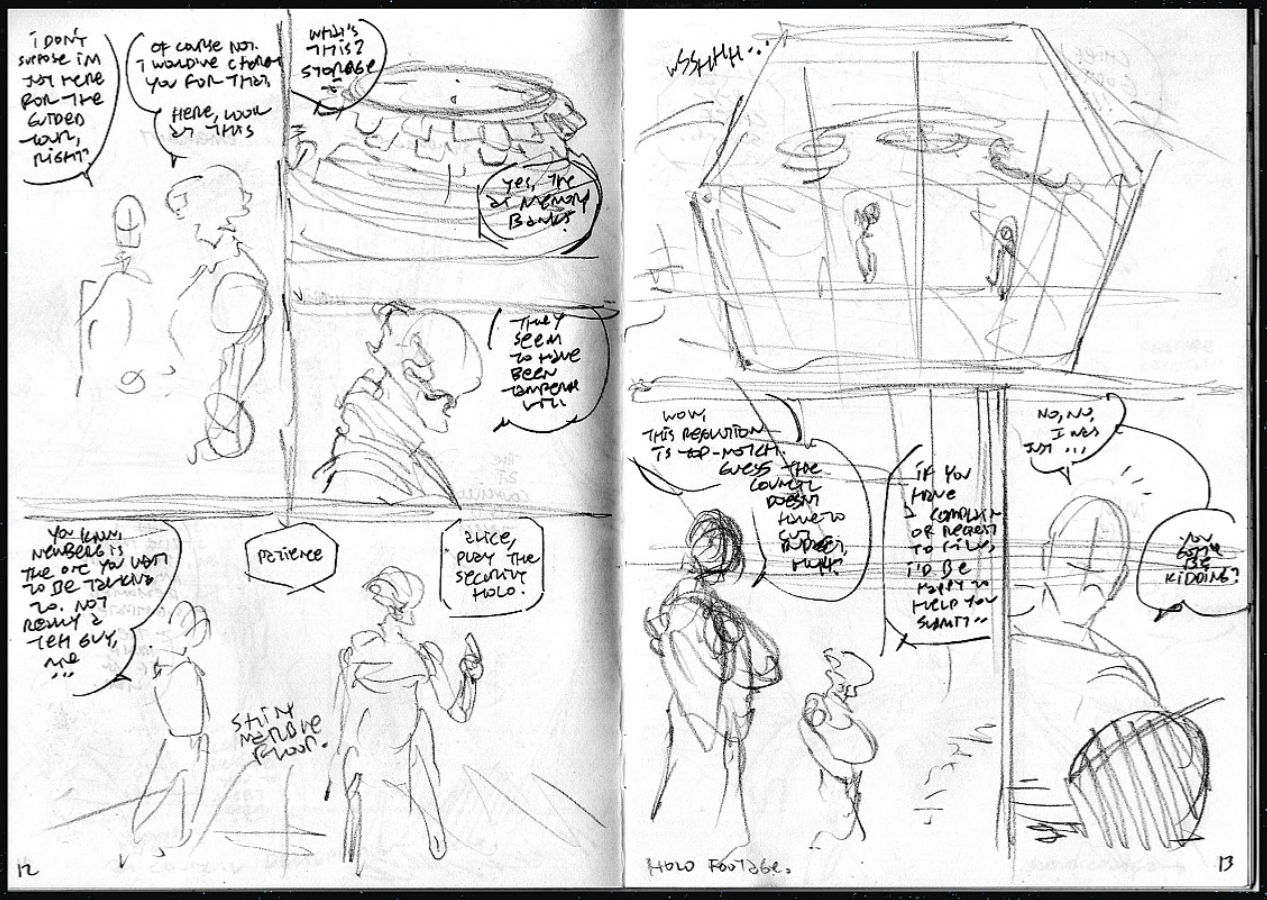
3

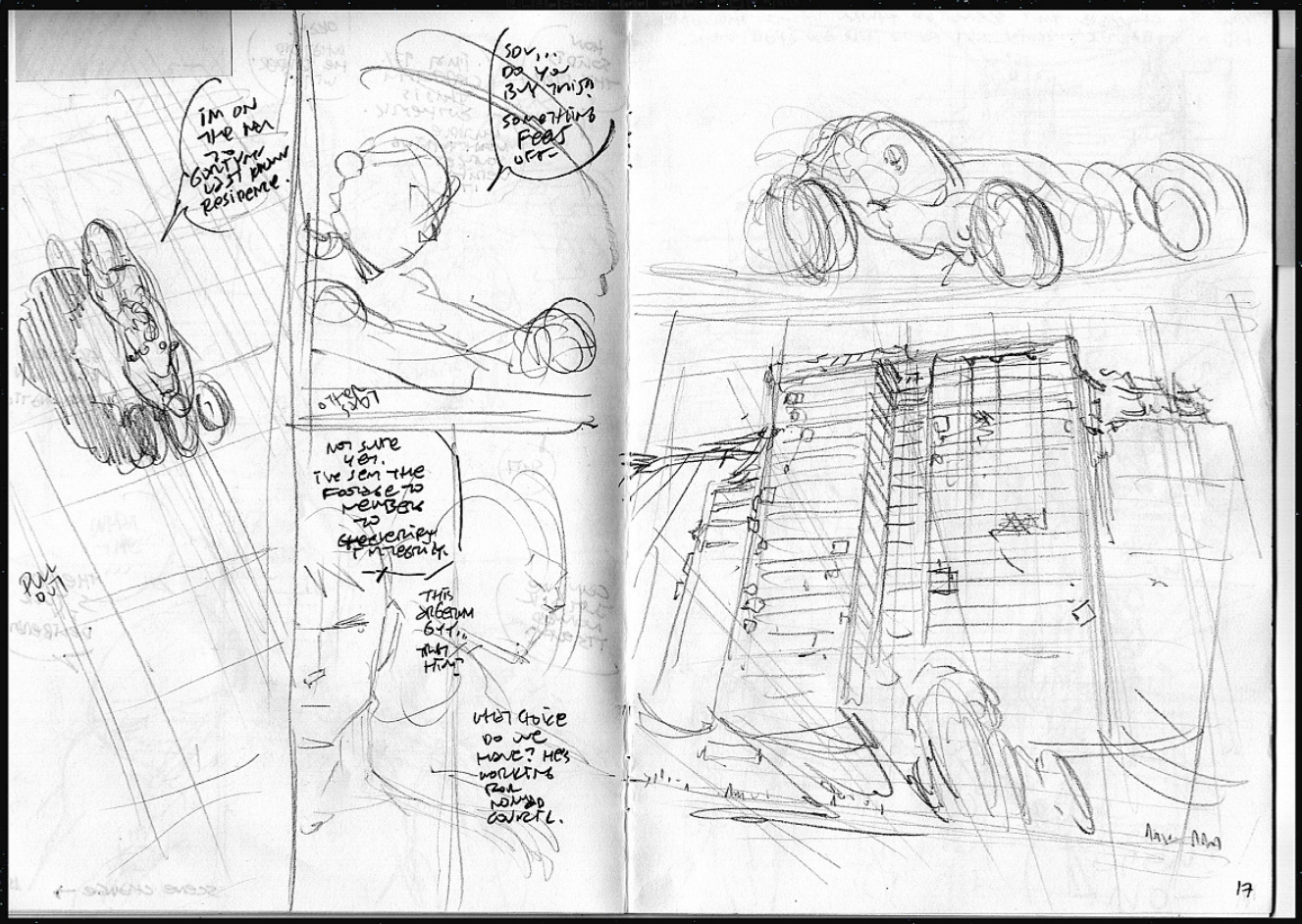

time
4
5

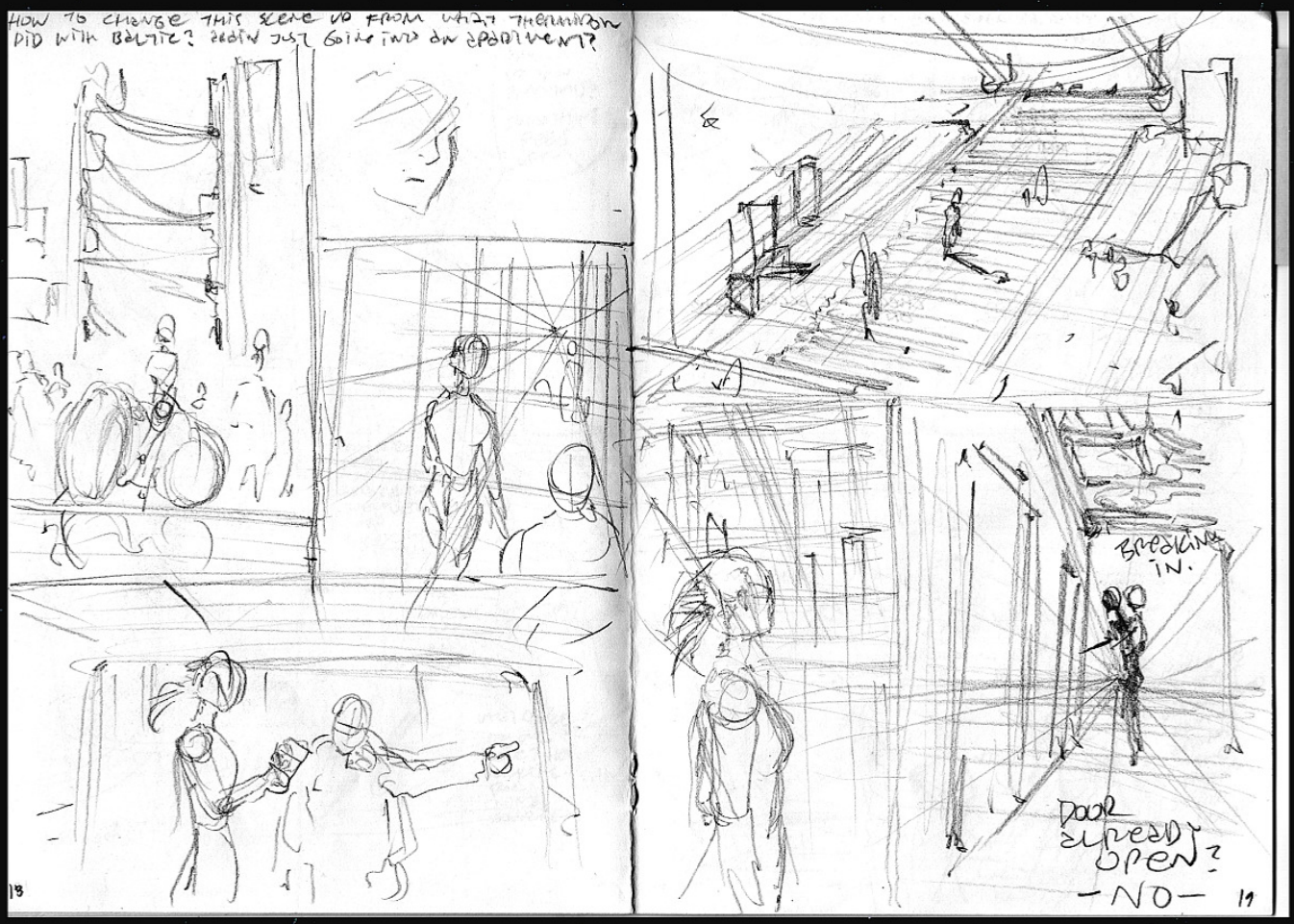

Hey! You with us?
Wow alive, Meow!
Yeah... what's going on? Why's a Council Rep here?
Beats me, Sid.
You think the Council's gonna axe the SDX to Mars?
"Sin Response" is you Meow
Yeah, yeah. Whatever. They responded to SID gave us a new name
Eh, is that all we did?
7

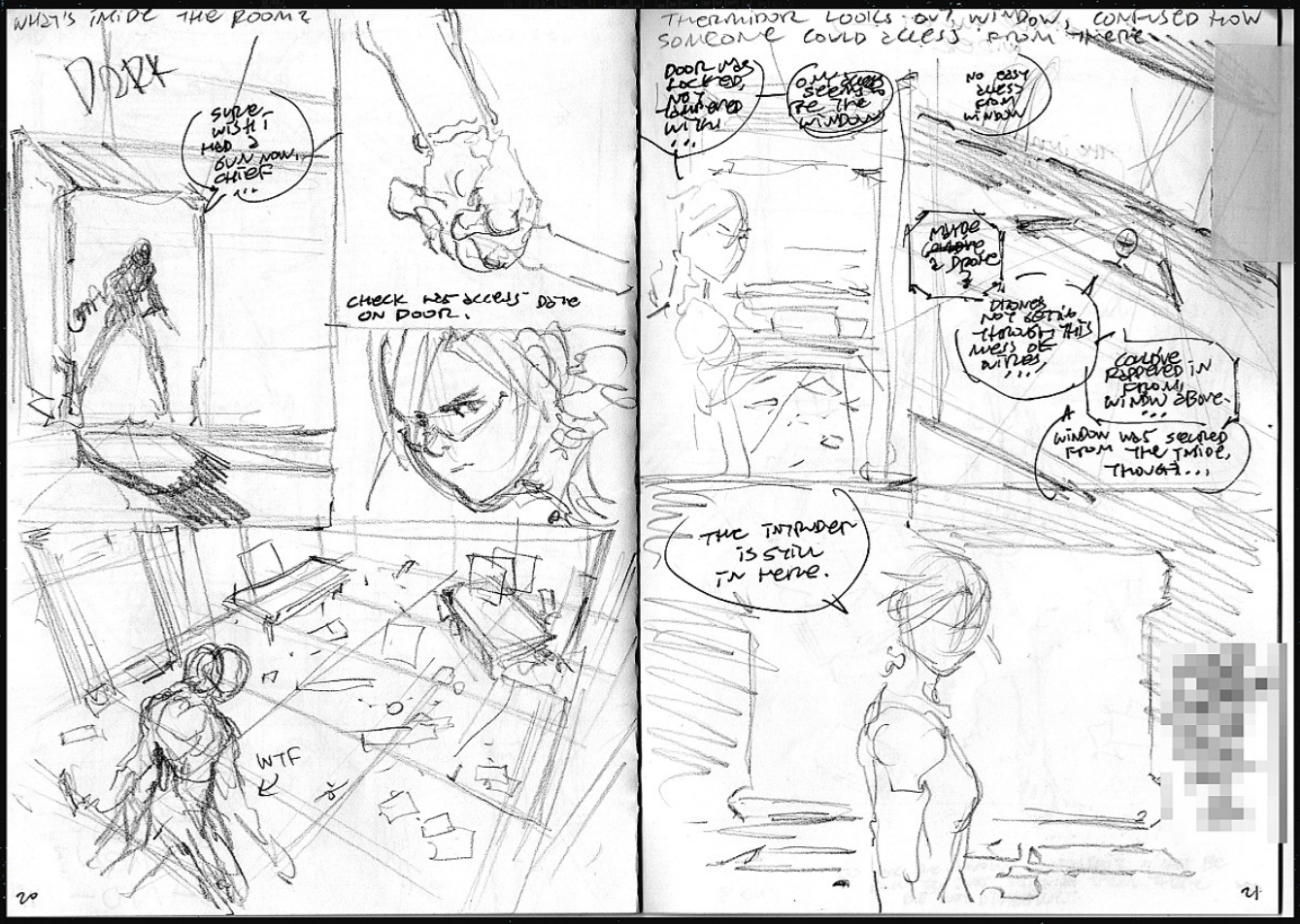

OR ARE YOU JUST HERE TO WORK MOST OF YOUR 20TH ANNIV?
I TAKE IT YOU ALREADY KNOW WHO WE ARE
SOLANO, THERMIDOR
AGENT ARGENTUM, REP OF THE DI COUNCIL. NICE TO MEET YA
NATURALLY. NOW, SHALL WE GET GOING? IT'S PROBABLY BEST YOU SAW EVERYTHING...
LET'S GO, I'LL DRIVE.
THANKS CAN "AGENT ARGENTUM"
NOT USING THE SUSPENSION?
HMPH, "IMPRESSED".
SIGH
HUMANS AND THEIR "BRAIN JUICES"...
4
7


THE NEW COUNCIL BUILDING...
COME, I'D LIKE YOU TO MEET THEM"
DI COUNCIL DELIBERATIONS SCENE.
MEMORY BANKS
SYMBOLIC
EMERGENT
HYBRID
THE DI COUNCILLORS THIS IS THEIR?
THIS IS THE HARD FOR THEIR MAIN RESONANCE SUBSTRATES.
THE BRAIN, IF YOU LIKE.
10
11


I DON'T SUPPOSE I'M JUST HERE FOR THE GUIDED TOUR, RIGHT?
OF COURSE NOT. I WOULDN'T CHARGE YOU FOR THAT.
HERE, WORK ON THIS
WHAT'S THIS? STORAGE
YES, THE ARMORY BANKS
THEY SEEM TO HAVE BEEN TAMPERED WITH.
YOU KNOW, NEWBIES IS THE ONE YOU WANT TO BE TALKING TO. NOT REALLY A TECH GUY, ME ...
PATIENCE
ALICE, PUSH THE SECURITY HOLO.
STINY MENACING FIGURE.
12
WSSHHH..
WOW, THIS RESOLUTION IS TOP-NOTCH. GUESS THE COUNCIL DOESN'T HAVE TO CUT BUDGET, HUH?
IF YOU HAVE A COMPLAINT OR REQUEST TO FILE, I'D BE HAPPY TO HELP YOU SUBMIT ...
NO, NO, I WAS JUST ...
YOU GOTTA BE KIDDING?
HOLO FOOTAGE.
13
CHIEF GOLTYN !!?!
EX-CHIEF SEVERO.
SHOW MARTINEZ
BIBER
WHAT THE ...
14
HOW SOLID IS THIS DATA?
I'M 97% CERTAIN THIS IS AUTHENTIC. MULTIPLE MONITORING SOURCES VERIFY IT.
STIFF
OKAY. WHAT DID HE BUMP WITH?
THERE, IN HIS HAND
HOLO
SIGNATURE KEYCHAIN EXPLOSION
KEYCHAIN
CAN'T WE JUST SEE FOOTAGE OF THE ACT?
THEY'RE STUCK IN DELIBERATION
SCENE CHANGE
15


I'M ON THE NEW GOTHAM WEST DOWN RESIDENCE.
SOV... DO YOU BUY THIS SOMETHING FEELS OFF-
OTHER SHOT
NOT SURE YET. I'VE SENT THE FOOTAGE TO NEWBERN TO GEOVERIFY INTEGRITY.
PULL OUT
THIS SIDEKICK GUY... THAT HIM?
WHAT CHOICE DO WE HAVE? HE'S WORKING FOR NOVAD COVERT.
17


HOW TO CHANGE THIS SCENE SO FROM WHAT THEMISON DID WITH BALTIC? BEGIN JUST GOING INTO AN APARTMENT?
BREAKING IN.
DOOR ALREADY OPEN?
-NO-
18
19

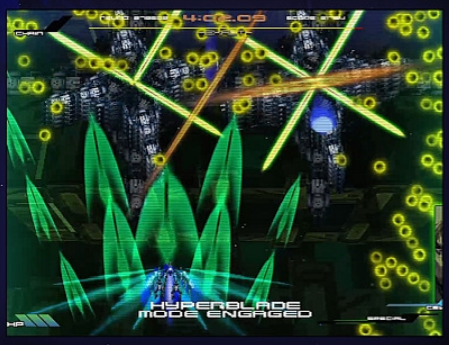

WHAT'S INSIDE THE ROOM?
DARK
SUPER WISH I HAD A GUN NOW, CHIEF...
CHECK HAS ACCESS DONE ON DOOR.
WTF
20
THERMINDER LOOKS OUT WINDOW, CONFUSED HOW SOMEONE COULD ACCESS FROM THERE.
DOOR WAS LOCKED, NOT TAMPERED WITH...
OH, STAIRS SEEMS TO BE THE WINDOW
NO EASY ACCESS FROM WINDOW
MAYBE CLIMBING A DRONE?
DRONES NOT GOOD THROUGH THIS MESS OF WIRES...
COULDVE RAPPELLED IN FROM WINDOW ABOVE...
WINDOW WAS SECURED FROM THE INSIDE, THOUGH...
THE INTRUDER IS STILL IN HERE.
21

← MAYBE PULL OUT WIDER. →
THE INTRUDER IS STILL IN HERE...
22
END ?

What is the value of a Bullet when you wield a SWORD

Sword Action Shooting Game

BIRDCAGE



The RADON Daughters have launched their ultimate weapon.

The World will not survive it.

Break out of the Cage.

Turn the Sword against your own.

The Shell has cracked.

Now break the EGG once and for all.

POLYGON BIRD

POLYGONBIRD.GAMES

Wishlist BIRDCAGE on STEAM